

The Fire and Emergency Medical Services News



New Hampshire Fire Academy



Winter 2005

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A Service of New Hampshire Division of Fire Standards & Training and Emergency Medical Services

"Training on the Leading Edge"

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Dear New Hampshire Emergency Responders:

In my last newsletter article I spoke about the risks we take and the risks of being named in a legal suit. This edition I want to discuss the ways we can minimize the legal risks we take. That is how we are organized, how we adopt and follow nationally accepted rules, and how we handle personnel issues. If there are areas that put us in elevated jeopardy, these are where they lie!

As I travel the state and talk to fire service personnel I am amazed...in a good sense and in a bad sense! It is good that some emergency response agencies take so seriously the risks we take and how they are handled in a proactive method...more about this shortly. In the bad sense that there are some agencies amongst us that are just the opposite...no policies, procedure, or even discipline for that matter, thankfully these are few and far between!

Let's focus on being proactive in our manner of handling potential legal issues. It is really quite easy, we need to have policies and procedures that are written, reviewed by legal staff, adopted, trained in their application, but most of all mandated and followed! These documents are not worth the paper written on if they are not followed, and discipline taken when there are transgressions! This is IMPORTANT!

Ok, so you want to know how we should develop policies and procedures...I am going to give you some references:

- * National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA (www.nfpa.org). Special attention to the Standard for Providing Emergency Services to the Public, Standard #1201, 2004 edition.
- * Commission for the Accreditation of Ambulance Services, Glenview, IL (www.caas.org).
- * Commission on Fire Accreditation International, Chantilly, VA (www.cfainet.org).
- * Insurance Services Office, Jersey City, NJ (www.iso.com).

If I were to make one recommendation to an emergency services agency it would be to become accredited by one of the accrediting agencies listed above...by completing this process you will have been deemed to have the policies, procedures, training, staffing, and other required issues covered. My compliments to the Derry Fire Department and Rockingham Ambulance Service...they are both accredited by CAAS. We are yet to have a fire department in New Hampshire accredited through CFAI. My challenge to every agency in this great state: do the best you can for your citizens, this may mean to assure you follow the nationally accepted standards and become accredited!

STAY SAFE and have a great 2005!

Rick Mason

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1st Thurs. of each month (except July-August)	NH Fire Standards & Training Commission Meeting, 10:00 a.m.	NHFA
2nd Thurs. of each month	Tests/Retests; sittings at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; preregistration required by 1st of month	NHFA
3rd Friday of each month	National Registry Exam for EMS at 9:00am	NHFA
Every month	Train-the-Trainers (watch for listings)	NHFA

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:

04/22, 04/23, & 04/24/05	5th Annual NH EMS Conference	Mt. Sunapee Resort, Newbury, NH
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FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES INSTRUCTOR PROGRAMS: Watch for future listings

FIRE OFFICER PROGRAMS: Watch for future listings

FIREFIGHTER PROGRAMS:

03/15/05 - 07/26/05	Firefighter I	NHFA
03/30/05 - 08/15/05	Firefighter I	Henniker Fire Dept.
03/12/05 - 05/16/05	Firefighter II	NHFA
04/04/05 - 06/17/05	Recruit School 2005	NHFA
04/11/05 - 04/22/05	Certified Career Firefighter	NHFA

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROGRAMS: Watch for future listings

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING: Watch for future listings

NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY PROGRAMS:

04/05/05 & 04/06/05	Emergency Response to Terrorism, Basic Concepts - Recruit School	NHFA
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SPECIALTY PROGRAMS:

04/09/05 & 04/10/05	Incident Command System	Monadnock Community Hospital
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TERRORISM PROGRAMS: Watch for future listings

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER PROGRAMS: Watch for future listings

NEW HAMPSHIRE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AWARD THEIR FINEST IN FIVE CATEGORIES

The Division's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) joined over 300 people on the evening of October 16th, 2004 to award five annual statewide EMS awards. The awards banquet was held at the North Country EMS Conference in Bartlett, NH, sponsored by Littleton Regional Hospital. Director Rick Mason and Suzanne Prentiss, Chief of the Bureau of EMS, presented the recipients with their awards.

2004 was the ninth year of the Bureau presented EMS awards. Nominated by their peers, the award winners were recognized in five categories important to pre-hospital emergency medicine. In order from the longest standing award to newest honorees; achievement, heroism, "Unit of the Year", appreciation and "Educator of the Year", are the emergency medical services classifications honored.

The Pamela Mitchell/Richard Connolly Memorial EMS Achievement Award has been presented to two EMS Providers from Gorham, New Hampshire. Mike Pelchat and Diane Holmes received this award for outstanding contributions to the EMS System of New Hampshire, specifically in the wilderness search and rescue area and longtime mentors for new Providers to EMS.

The Lawrence A. Volz Memorial Heroism Award was presented to two individuals from Lincoln and Woodstock, NH area Services. Noah Glynn of Lin-Wood Ambulance and Ken Mack of Woodstock Fire Department, were presented the Volz Heroism award for acts of bravery during a cold weather, wilderness rescue during the spring of 2004.

The BoundTree Corporation "Unit Of The Year" Award was presented to the Pittsfield Fire Department and Ambulance for exemplary services to their community. Involved in injury prevention programs, public education projects, the senior citizen check-in program, holiday dinners for shut-ins and fire safety programs, this organization with its combination volunteer and full-time members, stand out as true community champions.

The Dr. David J. Connor Memorial EMS Appreciation Award was presented to Dr. Frank Hubbell of Conway, NH and Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities (SOLO). This award, affectionately known as the "Connor Honor", recognizes a person dedicated to "changing the face" of EMS in New Hampshire.

The fifth award, entitled "EMS Educator Of The Year", was presented to Mr. Scott Taylor of LRGHealthcare's Franklin Regional Hospital in Franklin, NH. An EMT-Paramedic and Hospital EMS Coordinator, Mr. Taylor has been honored for his contributions and commitment to EMS education and training in the state.

The Bureau of EMS is pleased to see the number of nominations for these awards grow each year. Please look to the Bureau's web site www.state.nh.us/safety/ems after March 2005 for the "2005 New Hampshire EMS Awards - Nomination Application" form.

IN SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE PROTOCOL FOR AIR MEDICAL SCENE RESPONSE

Medical research has shown that severely injured people have a better chance of survival and return to productive life if they are transported to a specially prepared trauma hospital. These people do worse if they go to a community hospital first, before being transferred to a trauma specialty facility.

Most of NH lies more than a 20-minute drive from the one Level I and four Level II facilities in the state. Severely injured people in NH have traditionally been transported by EMS to local community hospitals, then transferred to a Level I or II facility. Medical research would suggest that this practice causes these patients have a lower survival rate.

The enhanced availability and slowly increasing use of air medical transport (AMT) in NH over the past ten years has improved the movement of severe trauma patients somewhat. The majority of transports by air however, still fall into the pattern of EMS transport to local hospital, then transfer to Level I or II, albeit by faster means than by ground.

In order to improve the routing of severely injured people directly to the Level I and II facilities, the utilization of air medical transport in scene response must be improved. The air medical programs serving NH have done a commendable job of providing educational opportunities to EMS providers about air medical issues. This approach unfortunately has had only limited success. Significant improvement can only come about by the adoption of this concept by the physicians in EMS leadership positions throughout the state.

Individual physician preferences can have a long reaching impact on the delivery of EMS care in an area. This impact is not only by the EMS Medical Director who sets policy, but varies with each individual ED physician responding to a radio patch from the field. There are well over a hundred physicians practicing in emergency departments in NH. Consistency is problematic amongst such a diverse group.

To overcome this challenge, as well as a technical problem with contacting on-line medical control for severe trauma, the Trauma Medical Review Committee recently agreed to advocate for statewide standing order protocols for activation of air medical transport for prehospital response for a severely injured patients.

Technically, providing a radio or cell phone report to an emergency physician is often difficult and time consuming. Most ambulance radios have unreliable contact with the base hospital more than a few miles from the hospital. Cellular phone coverage is inconsistent in rural areas. Getting a doctor to the radio may take up to five or ten minutes, depending on the extent of patient care in which the physician is already engaged in the ED.

Air medical transport needs to be engaged early in the process. On-line medical control, requiring EMS providers to make an assessment (and immediate intervention of life-threatening conditions) then set up a radio patch, then give report to a doctor who decides whether to grant permission for AMT takes valuable time. That ten to fifteen minute (often longer) period would be much better spent launching the helicopter and getting the resource enroute to the scene.

An additional problem with on-line medical control is the need for an EMS provider to "paint a clear picture" for the doctor to decide whether to grant or deny permission to call a helicopter. The most experienced and qualified EMS providers who could most effectively give such a report are usually immersed in patient care and cannot take time to give a report on the radio. A less experienced, less proficient provider may give a poor radio patch, the MD cannot make a choice based on the information given, and wants to see the patient him/herself.

The problem that EMS physicians that don't support AMT are concerned with is "overtriage". The belief is that EMS providers will overreact to patients who "look bad" but could be adequately treated in the local hospital. Overtriage burdens the trauma system and the AMT system unnecessarily. Avoiding overtriage is more appropriately the role of off-line medical direction rather than online medical control. Education and quality improvement (QI) review activities will fine-tune the system. EMS medical directors should discuss the revised protocols with their EMS providers, then review each occurrence of scene AMT for appropriateness. The QI process must not be perceived by EMS providers as punitive. Successful QI programs seek to improve the system by constantly working toward making the system better.

What would the impact of additional QI activities involving AMT be to local EMS medical directors? NH BEMS data show that in a recent twelve-month period AMT was used to transport trauma patients 254 times. Out of those 254 patients 59 were flown directly from the scene (23%). This percentage is less than half the national average. Doubling the number of scene responses would likely capture many of those who would benefit from scene AMT response. The total of 120 flights per year, divided by the 26 hospitals in NH would not be more than 4-6 cases to review per year for any one medical director. This number does not appear to be burdensome and is a better way of managing transport for severely injured people.

Continued From Page 4

It must be noted that there is still a very important role for community hospitals in treating severe trauma patients. Despite multiple AMT programs working in cooperation with each other, there will be times when AMT will not be available due to weather, maintenance, or concurrent flights. These patients will require stabilization at the local level. In addition it must be emphasized that the patient subset affected by this plan is the most severely injured. Patients whose extent of injury is not as clear to EMS providers will always have the option of initiating a consultation with on-line medical control about AMT or direct transport to the local hospital.

It is anticipated that this effort will experience some "trials and tribulations". That is to be expected. But it is very important at this juncture to better utilize the important tool that our system has at its disposal to improve care for the most severely injured in NH. Hospital providers, EMS medical directors, and EMS providers must collaborate, be open minded, and flexible so these improvements may be successful.

The proposed air medical transport protocol has been approved by the NH EMS Medical Control Board. All the NH EMS protocols are currently under revision. It is anticipated that the AMT protocol will be included in the rollout of the protocols in early 2005. For any questions regarding the new protocol please contact Clay Odell, Trauma Coordinator at 603-448-4927 or codell@safety.state.nh.us.

Division Receives Award

On October 28, 2004, the Division received the Sponsor Excellence Award; this is from the 1st Annual blood drive held in the memory of Lt. Mark Miller. Lt. Miller died in a tragic diving accident last winter. The Award was presented for steadfast commitment to quality patient care through outstanding and exemplary support of and contributions to the Volunteer Blood Donor Program.

The Blood Drive collected 119 units of blood. The drive will be held again this year during the summer. We look forward to having members of the Fire and EMS community donate their time and blood to this worthy cause.



Director Richard A. Mason receives the Sponsor Excellence Award from John Peterson of the Red Cross. The Award is for the outstanding effort by the Division in the 1st Annual Lt. Mark Miller Memorial Blood Drive.

New Hampshire Fire Service Committee of Merit

DIVISION OF FIRE STANDARDS AND TRAINING
33 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03305-0002

NEW HAMPSHIRE FIRE SERVICE COMMITTEE OF MERIT AWARD PROGRAM

The New Hampshire Fire Service Committee of Merit announces its Annual New Hampshire Fire Service Awards Program, and again requests the support of all fire service personnel in recognizing outstanding acts of courage by career, call and volunteer fire service personnel of New Hampshire.

This program was initiated in 1986, after the death of Concord Dispatcher Paul Sypek. In his estate, Paul left the original funding and designated a committee to carry out the plan for this recognition. The first annual award ceremony was held in 1987 and, since then, many New Hampshire fire service personnel have been given awards for their heroic actions.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT NOW!

There are many fire service personnel throughout the State who have performed courageous acts that should be recognized. Any events occurring between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004 are eligible at this time for presentation at our next awards ceremony in 2005.

NOMINATION PROCEDURES

1. A typed letter on proper organization letterhead from (a) Chief of Fire Department of designee; (b) head of a recognized fire service organization or union; (c) Town or City Manager, Mayor, Selectman, etc. The letter is to describe the action and circumstances leading to the action. It must be a detailed report of what happened, including the type of emergency, time of day, date, and a description of conditions which made the event hazardous, dangerous or unusual.
2. Nominee(s)' name, mailing address, home and work telephone, fire department or organization, and rank must be included in the letter.
3. All paid, call, and volunteer firefighters or emergency service personnel are eligible; also, awards may be made posthumously.
4. Include any pertinent newspaper clippings, photographs, or videos, as well as a listing of any other awards the nominee(s) received.

DEADLINE: Must be postmarked no later than January 30, 2005

MAIL TO: NH Fire Service Committee of Merit
Stacey DeVol, Secretary
33 Hazen Drive, Concord NH 03305

ANY QUESTIONS: Contact Stacey at 1-800-371-4503 or 271-2661

FST & EMS Division Receives Grant to Start Up TEMSIS

On November 5, 2004 the Division received a grant from the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency. The grant totaled \$366,145.13 and will fund the startup costs of the TEMSIS Project. TEMSIS or the Trauma and Emergency Medical Services Information System is the documentation future for EMS in New Hampshire. The web based system will replace the current paper Patient Care Report (PCR). The timeliness, types, and access to data on the statewide and very local level (hospitals & EMS Units) will be significantly improved under this system. Under the present PCR system information is entered multiple times in multiple databases and on average has a one to two year period prior to availability for research and planning purposes.

The funds in this grant will cover the costs of computers in the hospital E.D.'s, computers for underfunded EMS Units, a limited number of mobile PC licenses, and the development costs of the system. This grant is one of the largest received by the Division. The efforts on the Research Section and the many volunteers on the TEMSIS groups are credited with securing this grant.

Underway now is the development of an implementation/roll-out plan for TEMSIS Project, including set-up and training. This process will begin in 2005.

National EMS Scope of Practice Model

The National EMS Scope of Practice is the second of five elements of the EMS Education Agenda. The first element, the National EMS Core Content, was released to National Highway Traffic Safety Agency (NHTSA) in 2003 and heralded the start-up of the Scope of Practice group.

On November 5, 2004, Dan Manz, Director of Vermont EMS and Principal Investigator for the National Scope of Practice Model Project, traveled to the NH Fire Academy (NHFA) to present the history and development of the Model's first draft. The presentation and discussion was held at the NHFA and teleconferenced to Area Health Education Center (AHEC) in Littleton, NH. There were approximately 85 attendees including NH Bureau of Emergency Medical Systems (NHBEMS) staff at the presentation and discussion, and several have expressed interest in assisting NH in moving this process forward.

Background: The 1996 release of the EMS Agenda for the Future identified 14 attributes that form the foundation of the development of a national EMS model. The EMS Education Systems is one of those attributes. In June 2000 the EMS community saw the release of the **EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach**. This document expanded the education systems goals set in the Agenda to include defining both the elements of the education system and the interrelationships necessary to achieve the vision. The five elements are:

The National EMS Core Content

This is a comprehensive list of knowledge and skills needed for out-of-hospital emergency care (July 2003).

The National EMS Scope of Practice Model

The Practice Model divides the National EMS Core Content into specific levels of EMS practice. It defines minimum knowledge and skills for each level of EMS provider (Draft 1.0 release Summer 2004).

The National EMS Education Standards

This component replaces the current models for National Standard Curricula. It will specify the minimum terminal learning objectives for each level of EMS practice (to be developed).

The National EMS Education Program Accreditation

National Accreditation of programs will be expanded to include all levels of EMS instruction. This will result in enhanced consistency of quality of instruction and educational outcomes at all levels of EMS education (to be developed).

The National EMS Certification

National EMS certification will be available for all levels of EMS providers. National certification will enhance the consistency of the quality of educational programs and thereby enhance the quality of the EMS care delivered by nationally certified graduates of accredited institutions. In order to be eligible for National EMS Certification, a student must have graduated from an institution that is nationally accredited (to be developed).

More information on the EMS Scope of Practice can be found at: <http://www.emsscopeofpractice.org>.



NH FOREST FIRE SERVICES

News & Notes



Remember . . . Safety First . . . On Every Incident . . . Every Time!

This year's Volunteer Fire Assistance grant applications have been mailed to all NH towns below 10,000 in population. The focus of the grant is forest fire suppression & safety equipment, communication equipment, and structural firefighting equipment. Each town is eligible for up to \$2000.00 in a 50/50 cost-share. Applications are due back by December 17th, and grant awards will follow in the next month. With a one-page application, this is one of the easiest federal fire grants to apply for, and many towns have received awards in the past. Please take advantage of this opportunity to increase your fire department's safety & operational capabilities - with a cost share grant, a little can go a long way!

The Forest Rangers are delivering Smokey Bear prevention materials to libraries throughout the state to explore a popular avenue to reach the younger population with crucial fire safety messages. This program will reach ten libraries in each Forest Ranger district, and will provide feedback from librarians regarding success of the program.

Warden and Deputy reappointments are again being processed in each Forest Ranger district. Your local Forest Ranger will work diligently to ensure that well-qualified personnel are meeting wildland fire protection and forest protection objectives for your town and the state of New Hampshire. If you would like to know how this process works, please contact your local Forest Ranger or attend any Warden Association meeting for more details.

Forest Rangers are already planning for next year's Warden and Forestry Training. If you have any suggestions or would like to see a particular presentation, please contact your local Forest Ranger at 271-2217 and we will welcome your helpful suggestions.

2004 FIRE STATISTICS

(All fires reported as of November 18, 2004)

TOTALS BY COUNTY

	# of Fires	Acres
Belknap	61	5.71
Carroll	57	7.80
Cheshire	17	13.64
Coos	14	4.14
Grafton	77	78.37
Hillsborough	62	10.70
Merrimack	104	19.11
Rockingham	27	1.26
Strafford	30	2.01
Sullivan	13	4.50

CAUSES OF FIRES REPORTED

Arson	15
Campfire	41
Children	12
Smoking	19
Debris	201
Railroad	1
Lightning	4
Equipment	5
Misc*	163

(*Misc: power lines, fireworks, electric fences, etc.)

Total Fires

Total Acres

2004	462	147
2003	374	100
2002	540	187
2001	942	428

New Courses added to the Fire Academy Curriculum

As part of the reorganization of the Bureau of Emergency Management (BEM) earlier this year, the training unit of BEM was transferred to the Division of Fire Standards and Training and Emergency Medical Services, ensuring that all First Responder training would be under one roof. The training unit consisted of Mr. Robert Jeffries, Radiological Training Officer and Mr. Roy Nieder, Training Officer. Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Nieder are now Program Coordinators in the Special Operations Section working for Captain Andy Anderson. Mr. Jeffries and Mr. Nieder as Program Coordinators will continue to teach the courses which they did over at BEM in addition to teaching courses at the Fire Academy. New courses for the Fire Academy Curriculum will be the radiological training associated with the two nuclear power plants, Seabrook and Vermont Yankee. The training for the four Reception/

Decontamination Centers of Keene, Manchester, Rochester, and Dover is also a Fire Academy responsibility and may be scheduled through Mr. Jeffries. The radiological training associated with the shipment of High Level Radioactive waste, Spent Nuclear Fuel developed by the U.S. Department of Energy will now be scheduled through the Fire Academy. Radiological training for all communities and State agencies will still be available through Mr. Jeffries's program. Mr. Nieder will still provide the FEMA courses, which he has done in the past, as well as the NIMS, CERT and Homeland Security programs, which he has been involved with. Mr. Nieder will also be working the Incident Command training for the NIMS compliance requirements for the community's responders. You may reach Mr. Jeffries at 271-2661 ext. 124 and Mr. Nieder at 271-2661 ext. 125

FIRE/RESCUE/EMS- NEW ENGLAND 2005

June 23-26, 2005

Springfield, MA

For more information: www.newenglandfirechiefs.org

NH EMS Training Officers Come Together

In an attempt to assist the licensed EMS Units in the state with issues surrounding training and continuing education hours for their Providers, the Bureau of EMS is initiating an e-mail group for all interested EMS Training Officers.

This idea was a brainstorm during a training session in October at the North Country EMS Conference sponsored by Littleton Regional Hospital. "The EMS Training Officer" program was a full-day session focusing on the responsibilities of EMS Training Officers. Resources available, documentation requirements, educational methodology and rules effecting training were also discussed in detail. Twenty individual Training Officers attended this training and supported the need for more training and a method for on-going communication between this level of administrator in the state.

A Training Officers (T.O.) handbook was created for the participants in this program and is in the process of being enhanced upon. This handbook will be available in the near future to other T.O.'s and an additional EMS Training Officers program will be offered at the upcoming EMS Conference sponsored by New London Hospital, April 22 - 24, 2005. Visit the hospital's web site in the upcoming months to register for this and other courses www.newlondonhospital.org.

If you are an EMS T.O. and are interested in participating in the Bureau maintained e-mail group, please send a request to Field Services Coordinator Kathy Doolan at kdoolan@safety.state.nh.us.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

AVAILABLE AT NO CHARGE TO NH FIREFIGHTERS AND EMS PROVIDERS

Subscriptions to the quarterly Newsletter are available to NH Firefighters and EMS Providers at no charge simply by completing the request below.

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Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Primary Fire Dept. Affiliation: Full Time Career (over \$10,000 Annually?): Yes (☐) No (☐)

Primary Fire Department: _____

Rank: _____

Secondary Fire Department: _____ Rank: _____

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